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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4640th meeting of the Security Council, held on 31 October 2002, in continuation of its consideration of the item entitled "Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations system and the Central African region in the maintenance of peace and security" at its meeting held on 22 October 2002, the President made the following statement on behalf of the Security Council:

"The Security Council recalls all the statements by its President concerning the situation in Africa and the action taken by the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, in the field of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building.

"The Security Council emphasizes the importance of the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1998/318).

"The Security Council recognizes that despite its enormous potential which could make it one of the poles of development of the continent, Central Africa has yet to achieve the stability that would enable it to utilize its resources to the maximum benefit of its population in an equitable manner.

"The Security Council notes that five of the twelve peacekeeping and peace-building missions under way on the continent are established in Central Africa. The Council also notes that of the sixteen Special Representatives and Special Envoys of the Secretary-General in Africa, six are in Central Africa. In this regard, it notes the work being done by the ad hoc Working Group on conflict prevention and resolution in Africa to improve the effectiveness of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Africa.

"The Security Council observes that the inadequacy of institutional and human capacities, particularly those directed towards the integration process, has hindered the social, economic and political integration in Central Africa.

"The Security Council takes note with satisfaction of the efforts made by the Central African States, both on their own initiative and with the support of the international community, to focus on the difficulties afflicting this key region of Africa. It also commends the progress made by certain Central African countries with regard to the promotion of democracy, the protection of human rights and sustainable development and encourages further efforts in this regard throughout the region.

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"The Security Council welcomes the increasing awareness of these difficulties among the Central African States which, at the ninth session of the Summit of Heads of State and Government, held at Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, on 24 June 1999, permitted a revival of the activities of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and in particular the incorporation of a collective security component. In that connection, the Heads of State and Government set three principal priorities:

To develop sufficient capacities to ensure peace, security and stability in the region, as a prerequisite for economic development;

To promote the social, economic and monetary integration of Central Africa;

To develop within the subregion a genuine culture of integration.

"The Security Council also welcomes subregional efforts to promote conflict prevention, management and resolution in Central Africa. In that connection, the Council recognizes the steps taken by Central African countries to settle conflicts by peaceful means including through the conclusion, with the strong support of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, of a Protocol establishing, on 24 June 2000 (A/RES/55/34 B), the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX), comprising a Mutual Assistance Pact and a Non-Aggression Pact. In this regard, it encourages its speedy ratification and implementation by all the countries concerned and urges United Nations Member States in a position to do so, to support the operationalization of its main structures, inter alia, the Central African Early Warning System, the Defence and Security Commission the Central African Multinational Force, with the full support of the United Nations system.

"The Security Council also recognizes the important role that regional and subregional organizations can play in preventing the illicit traffic of small arms and light weapons and the flow of such arms to conflicts, and underscores the importance of regional agreements and cooperation as well as strengthening subregional technical capacities to prevent such flows.

"The Security Council notes with satisfaction that as a result of all these efforts the subregion is gradually emerging from the conflicts that affect it, which offers an opportunity to build peace to be seized by all parties, with a requirement for the mobilization of significant resources to support demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programmes.

"The Security Council affirms the need to promote and strengthen the partnership between the United Nations system and Central African States in relation to the maintenance of peace and security, and, in that connection, it emphasizes that capacities in the subregion, inter alia, in the area of conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace and security, as well as economic integration, should be strengthened. It also calls on the Central African States with the support of the United Nations system to improve the effectiveness, coordination and cohesion of the subregional organizations.

"The Security Council also reaffirms the importance of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in the process of conflict

resolution in Central Africa. In that connection, it urges the Central African States to initiate such programmes where they are needed, inter alia, through the implementation of quick impact projects and calls on the International Community to support them. The Security Council expresses its appreciation of the renewed commitment of the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to assist post-conflict operations in Central Africa in the short, medium and long term and encourages the organizations to closely coordinate their efforts with the Secretary-General and his Representatives in the field to ensure more efficiency and complementarity.

"The Security Council recommends the inclusion, where appropriate, of support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the mandates of peacekeeping and peace-building operations. It recognizes the interlinkage between peacekeeping and peace-building activities, and will continue to take into account the need for coordination and smooth transition from one phase to the other during its consideration of peace operations.

"The Security Council emphasizes the urgency of reaching an appropriate solution to the problem of refugees and internally displaced persons in Central Africa.

"The Security Council emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive, integrated, resolute and concerted approach to the issues of peace, security and development in Central Africa. In that connection, it invites the Secretary-General to brief the Security Council, within six months, on ways to implement such an approach for Central Africa, including through the dispatch to the region of an inter-agency evaluation mission."